

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 395

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

USIA WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 7636

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE, XF

SUBJ: NOV. 6 SYRIAN MEDIA REPORT SARG DECISION TO PLACE

SYRIAN FORCES IN LEBANON

1. MEDIA HIGHLIGHTED DECISION ANNOUNCED BY FONMIN KHADDAM THAT SARG HAS PLACED SYRIAN FORCES IN LEBANON, AMOUNTING TO 20,000 SOLDIERS, AT DISPOSAL OF PRES. SARKIS EFFECTIVE NOV. 5 AS PART OF ADF. PRESS ADDED THAT ADF EXPECTED TO ARRIVE IN LEBANESE DISPUTE HAVE WITHIN COMING FEW HOURS. CONFLICTING PARTIES TO LEBANESE DISPUTE HAVE REPORTEDLY EXPRESSED THEIR BELIEF THAT THESE FORCES WILL TAKE UP THEIR POSITIONS ALL OVER LEBANON BEGINNING NOV. 6.

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2. SANA DISPATCH CITED LEBANESE AUTHORITIES IN REPORT

THAT ATTENTION BEING CENTERED ON REOPENING BEIRUT AIRPORT. INITIAL INTENTION WAS TO REOPEN AIRPORT IF ADF SUCCEEDED IN CLEARING BEIRUT-ZAHLE ROAD, BUT SOME MILITARY EXPERTS HAVE EXPRESSED PREFERENCE TO PROCEED MORE CAUTIOUSLY IN REGARD TO AIRPORT. SNA NOTED DETERMINATION TO OPEN AIRPORT BEFORE SNOW IMPEDES TRAFFIC AT DAHR AL-BAYDAR.

3. PRESS CLAIMED INFORMED SOURCES IN BEIRUT BELIEVE PRES. SARKIS POSSESSES DOCUMENT SIGNED BY ALL CHRISTIAN LEADERS GRANTING HIM RIGHT TO INTRODUCE ARAB FORCES TO CHRISTIAN-CONTROLLED TERRITORY. SARKIS MET WITH PIERRE GEMAYEL AND LATER PHALANGE CHIEF DECLARED THAT CHRISTIANS HAVE NO OBJECTION TO ENTRY TO ADF TO EASTERN DISTRICT.

4. PRESS CITED AL-NAHAR SPECULATION THAT SAUDIS WILL SUPPLY BULK OF EQUIPMENT FOR ADF. ADF, ACCORDING TO AL-NAHAR, WILL INCLUDE 1000 SAUDIS AND 500 TROOPS FROM EACH OF UAE AND YEMEN. ADF DEPLOYMENT, ACCORDING TO LEBANESE PAPERS, WILL BE APPLIED IN THREE STAGES: (A) OPENING OF ALEY-AIRPORT ROAD, (B) STATIONING ADF ON SEPARATION LINES IN BEIRUT, AND (C) REOPENING BEIRUT-TRIPOLI ROAD.

5. MEDIA CONTINUE TO CRITICIZE IRAQI HOSTILITY TO ARAB SOLIDARITY. MOST RECENT IRAQI ACTION, ACCORDING TO MEDIA, AAS DECISION TO HALT SERVICING OF SYRIAN PLANES AT BAGHDAD AIRPORT.

6. MEDIA NOTED AL SECGEN RIYAD NOV. 6 BEGIN 24 DAY TOUR OF ELEVEN ARAB NATIONS TO DISCUSS IMPLEMENTATION OF SUMMIT RESOLUTIONS.

7. PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL CHAIRMAN KHALID AL-FAHUM TOLD AL-THAWRAH THAT DATE HAS NOT YET BEEN FIXED FOR CONVENING THIRTEENTH SESSION OF PNC POSTPONED SINCE 1975 ON ACCOUNT OF LEBANESE CRISIS. HOWEVER, HE REITERATED NECESSITY TO HOLD CONGRESS SESSION TO EVALUATE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND ESTABLISH PLAN FOR NEXT STAGE OF PALESTINIAN ACTION.

8. AL-THAWRAH COLUMNIST CLAIMED SARG DECISION TO PLACE UNCLASSIFIED

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ITS FORCES IN LEBANON AT DISPOSAL OF PRES. SARKIS IS

"BEST EVIDENCE OF SERIOUS AND HONEST DESIRE TO CONTRIBUTE TO SETTLEMENT OF LEBANESE CRISIS. IT MEANS THAT SYRIA IS WORKING FOR RETURN TO PEACE TO LEBANON."

9. COMMENT: DETAILED PUBLICITY GIVEN TO IMMINENT ARRIVAL OF ADF FORCES, PLACEMENT OF SARG FORCES AT SARKIS DISPOSAL,

WILLINGNESS OF CHRISTIANS TO ACCEPT ADF PRESENCE IN TERRITORY THEY CONTROL, AND VARIOUS OPTIONS REGARDING USE OF ADF TO REOPEN HIGHWAYS AND AIRPORT INDICATE LOCAL PERCEPTION THAT SOME PROGRESS BEING MADE TO IMPLEMENT SUMMIT DECISIONS. STATEMENT BY FAHUM APPEARS TO BE AUTHORITATIVE RESPONSE TO RUMORS FROM CAIRO THAT DATE HAS BEEN AGREED UPON TO CONVENE PALESTINIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

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